

SHILDON URBAN DISTRICT.

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

TO

SHILDON

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,

For the Year ending, Dec. 31st, 1908.

S. FIELDEN,

M.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Fellow of the Incorporated Society of Medical Officers of Health,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

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TO THE
SHILDON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Report for 1908.

Vital Statistics.

The estimated population at mid-year was 13,687.

The number of occupied houses was 3,102, which gives an average of 4·41 persons for each house.

Births.

514 births were registered during the year (244 males and 270 females); of this number 7 boys and 10 girls were illegitimate.

In 1907 the births numbered 433.

The birth rate for 1908 was 37·55 per 1000 of population, as compared with a rate of 32·3 in 1907.

Deaths.

The number of deaths registered *in the district* amounted to 202, and to this number is to be added 9, of persons who died in Public Institutions *outside the district*, which brings up the total to 211.

Of these 115 were males, and 96 females. This represents a death rate of 15·4 per 1000 population, against 18·5 in 1907.

The deaths under the age of 1 year numbered 52, which is equivalent to a death rate of 3·79 per 1000 population, and of 101·16 per 1000 born.

The deaths from Zymotic Diseases, viz.: Smallpox, Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria and Membranous Croup, Fevers (Enteric and Continued, &c.), Measles, Whooping Cough, and Diarrhœa, amounted to 32— which is equal to a rate of 2·3 per 1000 population, against 2·0 in 1907, and 5·18 in 1906.

Phthisis caused 19 deaths, equal to a rate 1·38 per 1000 population, against 0·89 in 1907, and 1·44 in 1906.

The deaths from Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy numbered 35, equal to a rate of 2·55 per 1000 population, against 4·1 in 1907, and 2·59 in 1906.

21 Deaths were attributed to Diseases of the Heart, equal to a rate of 1·53 per 1000 population, against 1·86 in 1907.

Injuries of various kinds caused 4 deaths.

The deaths of persons *belonging to the district*, but which took place in the following Public Institutions *outside of it*, were—

In Lady Eden Hospital, Bishop Auckland	1
„ The Union Workhouse, „	4
„ The Infectious Diseases Hospital, Tindale Crescent - -	3
„ The County Asylum, Sedgfield -	1
	9

Of these 7 were males, and 2 females.

For comparison the following tables show--

1.-- Annual Birth Rates, and Death Rates, and Rates from the 7 chief Epidemic Diseases.				
Annual Rates for 1908 per 1000 living.				Deaths under 1 year per 1000
	Births.	Deaths from all causes.	Deaths from 7 chief Epidemic Diseases.	Registered Births.
England and Wales	26·5	14·7	1·29	121
Administrative } County of Durham }	37·0	17·5	2·70	153
Shildon U. District	37·5	15·5	2·33	101

2.--The general Mortality at ages specified in 1908.

At all ages.	Under 1 year	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	65 to 70	70 to 80	80 to 90
211	52	40	11	13	61	9	20	5

3.—Cases of Infectious Disease notified in 1908 :

	At all ages.	Under 1 Year.	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	over 65
Smallpox ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Scarlatina ...	28	—	10	14	3	1	—
Diphtheria ...	47	—	9	34	4	0	—
Enteric Fever ...	26	—	2	4	8	12	—
Puerperal Fever ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Erysipelas ...	8	—	—	—	1	6	1
Totals ...	109	—	21	52	16	19	1

4.—Cases of Infectious Disease notified in :

	1908	1907	1906	1905	1904	1903	1902	1901	1900
Scarlatina ...	28	45	50	68	94	105	98	88	88
Diphtheria ...	47	42	30	55	59	143	33	3	4
Enteric Fever ...	26	8	134	33	45	16	15	39	18
Puerperal Fever ...	—	2	—	1	2	1	—	—	—
Erysipelas ...	8	16	18	12	10	13	13	11	9
Totals ...	109	113	232	169	210	278	159	141	119

During the year 67 cases were removed to the Isolation Hospital at Tindale Crescent, viz :

Diphtheria	34
Enteric Fever	16
Scarlatina	17
	67

5.—*Population, Birth Rate, Death Rate, &c., for 10 years, 1888—1897.*

Year.	Estimated Population at Mid-Year.	Births.	Rate per 1000 popula- tion.	Deaths under 1 year.	Rate per 1000 Births register'd	Zymotic Diseases Deaths.	Rate per 1000 popula- tion.	Deaths at all ages.	Rate per 1000 popula- tion.
1888	9,320	337	36.1	44	130	6	0.65	160	17.2
1889	9,408	359	38.2	71	198	36	3.83	193	20.5
1890	9,496	326	34.3	56	170	27	2.79	177	18.7
1891	9,589	412	42.9	70	169	27	2.81	227	23.3
1892	9,790	371	37.8	51	137	10	1.02	162	16.5
1893	9,997	355	35.5	85	239	82	8.3	253	25.3
1894	10,209	342	33.5	49	143	7	0.68	145	14.2
1895	10,425	393	37.6	77	195	31	2.97	195	18.6
1896	10,645	326	30.6	43	131	19	1.78	160	15.0
1897	10,871	350	32.1	56	160	15	1.37	180	16.5
Averages for 10 yrs. 1888-1897	9,975	367	35.9	60	167	26	2.62	185	18.7

6.—Population, Birth Rate, Death Rate, &c., for 10 years, 1898—1907.

Year.	Estimated Population at Mid-Year	Births.	Rate per 1000 popula- tion.	Deaths under 1 year.	Rate per 1000 Births register'd	Zymotic Diseases Deaths.	Rate per 1000 popula- tion.	Deaths at all ages.	Rate per 1000 popula- tion.
1898	11,101	356	32.0	80	224	33	2.97	192	17.2
1899	11,336	383	33.7	70	182	26	2.28	205	18.0
1900	11,576	353	30.4	55	155	18	1.55	188	16.2
1901	11,821	404	34.1	76	188	48	4.06	206	17.4
1902	12,071	385	31.8	53	137	11	0.91	163	13.5
1903	12,326	479	38.8	87	181	33	2.67	219	17.7
1904	12,587	459	36.4	92	200	28	2.20	250	19.8
1905	12,853	460	35.7	92	167	35	2.70	247	19.2
1906	13,125	509	38.7	97	190.5	68	5.18	273	20.8
1907	13,687	433	32.3	79	182	27	2.00	249	18.5
Averages for 10 yrs. 1898-1907	12,220	419	34.4	78	181	32.7	2.65	213	17.8
1908	13,687	514	37.5	52	101	32	2.3	211	15.4

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Smallpox.

No case was reported.

Scarlatina.

There was a very satisfactory decline in the prevalence of this disease---the notified cases numbering 28, which had fallen from 105 in 1903, to 94 in 1904, to 68 in 1905, to 50 in 1906, they further declined to 45 in 1907, and with a still further decrease to 28 in 1908.

17 of the cases were removed to the Isolation Hospital, and 11 were treated in their own homes ; and it is a pleasure to report that no case had a fatal termination.

It is quite impossible to isolate effectually cases of Scarlatina and other infectious diseases, in the houses of the working classes in a District like ours ; still it is only right to say that in a very large proportion of cases I have observed that much more attention is paid to advice given with a view to prevent spread of such diseases than was formerly the case.

Diphtheria and Membranous Croup.

A reference to Table 4 indicates that Diphtheria rose from quite small proportions in 1900 to the very formidable figure of 143 cases in 1903. Since that time the number of cases notified has ranged between 59 in 1904, and 30 in 1906—the numbers in 1907 were 42, and 47 in 1908.

Of the 47 cases notified 34 were removed to the Isolation Hospital, and 3 succumbed to the disease.

Although the case mortality cannot be regarded as high, there is not the slightest doubt that many deaths from this disease would be prevented by the *prompt* use of Diphtheria anti-toxin; and I wish again to urge the Council to supply it gratuitously to Medical Practitioners for use in cases occurring in the District.

With regard to its causation, undoubtedly insanitary conditions in and about dwellings render the inmates more susceptible to disease of every kind; it is now very generally admitted, however, that it is for the most part spread by direct infection, and in several instances there was evidence of this by the too early attendance at school of children who had apparently recovered from the disease. It cannot be too generally known (as I have on many previous occasions pointed out), that persons convalescent from Diphtheria continue to be infectious for some time after they have apparently quite recovered—the Diphtheritic bacilli being still

present and active in their throat and nose. They are carriers of the disease and a constant source of danger to those coming into contact with them, and before declaring them free from infection, it is very desirable that at least one or two swabs be taken from the throat and submitted to bacteriological examination with a view to discovering the presence or absence of the bacillus.

Where the disease occurred, with very few exceptions, no insanitary conditions were found in the dwellings or their surroundings. In my last Annual Report I stated that the "Head Teachers in the several schools in the district had been requested to exclude children suffering from sore throat, or who were otherwise out of sorts, during the prevalence of Scarlatina and Diphtheria; and that at such times School Attendance Officers should not be too energetic for the sake of keeping up a good percentage of attendance," and I think it very desirable that these matters should still receive attention. I am still of opinion that more attention should be paid to the thorough ventilation of schools when children are absent at meal times, &c., and I would also strongly advise that all the various Class-rooms should be sprayed with an approved disinfectant at least once a week, say, on the Friday evening or Saturday morning. I feel sure that these measures would tend to promote the health of the children and prevent the spread of disease. Local authorities would be well advised if they offered to supply the necessary disinfectant, and they would be more than repaid by the lessened expenses in other directions.

Enteric Fever.

26 cases were notified—4 proving fatal. One case was notified in February, 6 in August, 1 in September, 9 in October, 7 in November, and 2 in December.

Thirteen cases were reported from the new streets off Redworth Road, in which, in former years, numerous cases have been met with.

To all these houses small ash-closets are supplied; the houses being occupied by workmen who are not engaged at the Collieries, and having to pay for their coals, and consequently producing very little in the way of ashes, the ash-closets contain very little but faecal matter, which in hot weather becomes very offensive; and the closets having been previously infected with Typhoid poison may be the probable cause of the disease showing itself from time to time. Flies passing from such quarters through pantry windows are very likely to contaminate food.

In one house 3 cases were notified. The first, notified and removed to Hospital Aug. 12th, discharged Oct. 15th. The second notified and removed to Hospital Nov. 17th, discharged Dec. 11th. The third notified Dec. 25th.

In another house 3 cases were also notified. The first on October 13th, removed to Hospital and discharged Nov. 25th. The second on same date was treated at home. The third notified and removed to Hospital Nov. 21st and discharged Nov. 27th.

The two cases notified on Oct. 13th, had, two nights before, partaken of mussels, and immediately became ill. They had been quite well up to that time.

In a third house there were also 3 cases reported. They were all notified and removed to Hospital on the same day and no further case followed. The probable cause was a very insanitary open midden privy.

All the other cases occurred in separate houses and were distributed all over the town. In none were any very insanitary conditions found, nor was the milk supply suspected, as in most instances the supply was from different sources.

The Water supply throughout the District is from the Moor land and beyond suspicion.

Wherever the disease was found, according to our routine plan, the closets and ashpits were cleared and freely disinfected without delay, and special pails supplied, together with disinfectants, for the reception of the excreta. All drains, &c., were also flushed with Hydr. Perchlor. Solution.

Rooms, &c. were disinfected after the illness or removal to Hospital, as is regularly done in infectious cases of every kind.

Measles.

A considerable number of cases occurred, but for the most part they were of mild type. Only 3 cases ended fatally.

Whooping Cough.

This disease prevailed to some extent, and it proved fatal in 11 cases, equal to a rate of 0·80 per 1,000 of population.

Diarrhœa.

Owing to fairly favourable weather conditions, this disease did not prevail to such an extent as usual, and only 11 deaths were ascribed to this cause, the rate per 1,000 being 0·80, that of the Administrative County reaching 1·44.

Infantile Mortality.

It has been my lot for so many years past to have to refer to this subject in very regretful terms that it is especially gratifying to be able, on the present occasion to report a condition of things which, I believe, constitutes a record since the formation of the Board in this District.

The total number of deaths under 1 year of age was 52, representing a rate of 101 per 1000 born, which compares favourably with 153 for the County.

The average rate for this District for the ten years 1888—1897 was 167; and for the subsequent ten years 1898—1907 the rate was 181. Certain years of this latter period stand out with unenviable prominence and the following Table shows the figures :—

Year.	Infantile Death Rate per 1,000 born per annum.
1898	224
1901	188
1904	200
1906	190·5

But for the 3rd quarter of 1906 the Infantile death rate per 1000 born per annum was the alarming one of 412.

It is very pleasing to be able, therefore, to record such a marked decrease for the year under consideration. As I have stated above, Diarrhœa—a very frequent cause of death in infants—was not very prevalent, but I am convinced that the frequent

reference to this matter at the meetings of your Council, my urgent recommendation for a long period of the appointment of a lady health visitor, and the publicity given to it in the Press, are very largely responsible for this more satisfactory condition of affairs. From personal observation, I can conscientiously state that more care and attention is given to advice and instruction, and medical aid is sought at an earlier stage in children's ailments. It is also to be remembered that a considerable proportion of infantile deaths in this District is the result of Premature Birth and Congenital Debility, and these conditions, again, are produced by child-bearing at too early an age, the poor state of health of prospective mothers and the consequent inability to suckle their children, due quite as much to ignorance, carelessness, and want of cleanliness, as to any sanitary defects in the buildings.

In June, 1908, your Council decided to accept the offer of the County Council to provide a lady health inspector for a period of three years, and at the same time to adopt the Notification of Births Act. Miss Ryan was appointed and entered upon her duties in January, 1909. She has undergone special training for the purpose, and has had large experience in London and elsewhere. From conversations I have had with her, I am satisfied that she is well qualified for her duties, as she is kindly disposed, tactful, and extremely desirous of doing all in her power to instruct and help with her advice in the nursing, feeding, and general management of infants. She has already done a

good deal of work in the District, and I am very pleased to hear she has been well received, and I feel no doubt at all that if only those coming under her care will pay attention to and follow out her instructions, much good will result.

General Sanitation.

I have frequently made inspections of the District in the course of the year, in some of which I have been accompanied by your Surveyor, Mr. Turnbull, and on several occasions by members of the Council. Dr. Hill, County Medical Officer, has also given me the benefit of his advice with regard to certain insanitary conditions in the District.

All cases of notified Infectious Disease have been investigated and instructions given, and when any case has terminated or been sent to Hospital the premises have been disinfected. Disinfectants were also supplied, and soiled linen, bedding, &c. disinfected, or, when found necessary, destroyed.

Any insanitary condition discovered was attended to.

Much good general sanitary work has been completed during the year. 30 or more W.C.'s have been substituted for very objectionable Privy Ashpits. A large number of foul conditions about dwelling houses, and structural defects of various kinds have been rectified. Defective traps and a

large number of other faults in connection with house drainage have been remedied. A defective and badly-laid sewer in Elmbank Road, which gave rise to troubles of various kinds, has been entirely re-laid. A sewer was also re-laid in Back York Street. The drainage of Station Street and Mechanic Street, which had frequently given trouble, has also been relaid. The sewers, generally, in the District have been frequently flushed during the year, and, where thought necessary, disinfectants have been used. Several front streets and quite a number of back streets have been made during the year, and others will be attended to at the earliest possible date.

Sewage Disposal Works.

These are working very satisfactorily, and the effluent from the Works has been very good.

Refuse Destructor.

The work done here has been in every way satisfactory, 10,650 loads of refuse having been destroyed during the year.

Scavenging.

There have been a few complaints during the year, but for the most part the work has been done very well.

Factories and Workshops.

There are 14 Factories and 32 Workshops in the District, and these have all been inspected twice during the year. Beyond some trifling defects in a few cases, nothing to complain of was discovered.

Cowsheds and Milkshops.

These have all been inspected twice, some of them more frequently, during the year. Most of the Cowsheds are in much the same condition, wooden erections of unsatisfactory character, and many of the Milk Shops are still capable of improvement.

Slaughter Houses.

All the Slaughter Houses in the District have been visited at least twice during the year, and, with one or two exceptions, they have been kept in fairly good order.

Water Supply.

This continues to be plentiful and in every way satisfactory.

Sanitary Requirements.

1. To continue the abolition of Midden Privies.
2. To continue the cementing or asphaltting of open spaces and back yards.
3. To continue with the making of front and back streets.
4. The erection of new Cowsheds and Dairies where necessary.
5. The gratuitous supply of Diphtheria Anti-toxin to Medical Practitioners in the District.

I have filled in the necessary Statistical Forms, and I will forward copies of the same to the L.G.B., the Secretary of State for Home Department, the County Council, &c.

In conclusion, I wish to express my best thanks to the Members of the Council for their unfailing kindness and courtesy, and to Mr. Turnbull, the Surveyor, for his valuable assistance, and the readiness he has shown on all occasions to carry out my suggestions.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

S. FIELDEN,
M.O.H.